THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that it had provided assistance to one company in June 1989 for setting up of a pilot plant of one tpd. capacity for manufacture of EMD. The project has not made any significant progress in its implementation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) IDBI has reported that the project taken up in Kerala in 1974 was based on a technology developed by National Metallurgical Laboratory (MML). The technology failed and the company remains closed since 1984. Subsequently, NML modified its process and the new project was an attempt to establish the modified process and produce EMD of consistent quality to the satisfaction of dry cell manufacturers on a pilot scale.

[Translation]

Despatch of Coal

5742. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of railway sidings and despatch posts in the B.C.C.L.;

(b) the number of railway sidings and despatch posts out of it where there is facility of weighbridge;

(c) the quantity of coal, coke, wash-coke, dilling and other quantity of coal despatched after weighing and without weighing on wighbridges through railways during each of the last three years;

(d) whether any complaints of shortage in the coal which was despatched after wighing on the railway weighbridge have been received during the above period;

(e) if so, the quantity of shortage separately in each case; and

(f) the amount of loss incurred due to shortage of coal which was despatched without weighing or after weighing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SIGH) : (a) and (b). According to the information furnished by Coal India Limited (CIL), BCCL is presently having 62 railway sidings. All the sidings have the facility for weighment of coal despatches.

(c) the details of weighed and unweighed quantity of coal, coke washed coal middlings despatched by BCCL during each of the last three years were as follow :

(In lakh tonnes)
(Data Provisional)

Commodity	1993-94			1994-95			1995-96		
	Total Qty despatched by Rail	Qty weighed	Qty unweighed	Total Qty despatched by Rail	Qty weighed	Qty unweighed	Total Qty despatched by Rail	Qty weighed	Qty unweighed
Coal	139.61	90.74	48.87	141.69	100.59	41.1	129.37	94.44	34.93
Coke	1.68	1.68	Nil	1.37	1.37	Nil	1.02	1.02	Nil
Wash-coal	40.51	40.51	Nil	42.80	42.80	Nil	41.16	41.16	Nil
Middling	10.84	10.84	Nil	9.35	9.35	Nil	11.16	11.16	Nil

(d) to (f). Coal is despatched by raild on FOR basis and the responsibility of the coal companies ceases once coal is despatched from the sidings and no claims of short receipt are entertained thereafter. BCCL have intimated that no specific complaints have been received regarding short supply of coal. However, as per the agreement with major consumers for the coal rakes which have been weighed at the loading end, such weighment results forms the basis for raising bills and payments is to be made accordingly. However, for unweighed wagons, the billing is intially done on the basis of carrying capacity of the wagons. The weighment at the unloading point is later accepted and claims allowed provided the consumers give proof of weighment at the destination end. Such claims are received periodically and settled after reconciliation etc.

The claims accepted by BCCL during the year 1993-94 and 1994-95 on account of difference in weight were as follows;

Year	Amount
1993-94	Rs. 556 lakhs
1995-96	Rs. 330 lakhs

For the year 1995-96, BCCL has received claims from the power houses to the extent of Rs. 592/- lakhs. The claims are in the process of reconciliation and settlement.

The actual claims which are allowed shall be known after the final settlement is arrived at.

Production of Cloth

5743. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of people employed in powerloom sector and handloom sector separately;

(b) the quantum of cloth produced separately in each of these sectors during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the handloom sector was less benefited as compared to the benfits of concessions given to the textiles industry for export during these year; and

(d) if not, the value and quantum of cloth exported in 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 out of total cloth manufactured in each of these sectors alongwith the capital invested therein during these years ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The number of people employed in Powerloom and Handloom Sectors are 6.8 million and 12.9 million (approx.) respectively.

(b) The Quantum of cloth produced by the Powerloom and Handloom and sectors during the last three years are given below :

(in mn. sq.m)

Sector	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96 (Provisional)
Powerloom	15994	15976	16332
Handloom	5851	6180	7020

(c) No Sir. In fact the handloom sector has exported cotton fabrics and made-ups more than the targets during 1993-94, 94-95, except 95-96.

(d) The value of cloth Cotton fabrics & made ups exported during the last 3 years in Handloom & Powerloom Sectors is as below :

(Rs. in Crores)

Sector	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96 (Targets)
Mill made			
Powerloom	3394.47	4620.64	5535.53
Handloom	1297.48	1504.60	1491.32

The quantity-wise export figures for separate sectors & figures on capital invested in the above segments of Textiles sectors are not maintained because of decentralised nature of vast fringe of each segment.

[English]

Rise in Price of Cement

5744. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been unprecedented rise in price of cement during the last three years;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Government to bring down the price at the level of 1994-95; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir. There has been no abnormal increase in price of cement during the last three years. During 1993-94, the price did not increase due to fall in demand and general recessionary conditions. During 1994-95 price increased on an average by Rs. 20-25/- per bag of 50 kgs. cement. This was mainly due to increase in the price of inputs, cost of fuel, transportation and overheads. During 1995-96 prices have been stable except during the period December-March which is a period of peak demand for cement. There were also short term rises in prices in a few markets like Bombay due to temporary shortages caused by transportation bottlenecks, strikes, etc.

(b) The control on price of cement has been removed with effect from 1st March, 1989. The industry has also been delicensed. Government has been encouraging creation of additional capacity and higher production of cement so that there is a healthy competition in the market and control on price. Government is providing all infrastructure support to the cement industry such as supply of coal and rail wagons on a priority basis.

(c) Does not arise.

Banking Support to Essar Group

5745. SHRI C. NARASIMHAN :
SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT :
SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether RBI's Department of Supervision (DOS) recently investigated into exposure of the banking system in the Essar group;

(b) whether the DOS investigation of the Essar group revealed that the total exposure of all banks and institutions together was over Rs. 4000 crores which was completely out of line with the group's turnover;

(c) whether RBI's DOS has suggested that the entire exposure of the financial institutions in the Essar group be classified as substandard; and

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that based on a complaint received by it, the matter of alleged misuse of banks' funds by the Essar Group of companies was got investigated by the State Bank of India (SBI). The report submitted by SBI has revealed that in certain cases, transfers were only book entries and no clear idea could be formed about their end-use. RBI is advising the SBI to get the matter investigated by an independent Chartered Accountants firm.